

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 18463 200638Z  
ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 DHA-02 NSC-06 INR-05 CIAE-00  
PRS-01 L-01 DODE-00 PM-03 /039 W  
-----114900 201012Z /10  
R 200615Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5344

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 18463

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, TH, US  
SUBJ: CHARGE CONVERSATION WITH INTERIOR MINISTER SAMAK ON  
HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: BANGKOK 18317

1. DURING THE COURSE OF CHARGE'S AUGUST 18 CALL ON INTERIOR MINISTER SAMAK SUNTHORAWET (REFTTEL), THE SUBJECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS CAME UP. SAMAK TOLD THE CHARGE THAT HE THOUGHT HE (THE CHARGE) WOULD FIND BANGKOK A SAFER PLACE TO LIVE THAN IT WAS FROM 1973-76, SINCE THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT WAS CRACKING DOWN SEVERELY ON CRIMINALS AND "UNDESIRABLE ELEMENTS". THE CHARGE USED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MENTION THE USG'S COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS, AND REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER'S AUGUST 9 SPEECH ON THE SUBJECT. SAMAK SAID THAT HE HAD READ THE SPEECH AND THAT THE RTG, TOO, BELIEVED IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUPPORTED PRESIDENT CARTER'S POLICIES IN THIS AREA. HE ASKED, HOWEVER, FOR US UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS NOW FACING THAILAND, PROBLEMS WHICH MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE RTG PRESENTLY TO ALLOW LIBERTIES COMPARABLE TO THOSE ENJOYED IN THE US. CHARGE NOTED THAT, AS DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER HAD SAID TO THE PRIME MINISTER, IT IS IMPORTANT TO ESTABLISH A TREND AND DIRECTION TO GOVERNMENT ACTIONS LEADING TOWARD GREATER  
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POLITICAL RIGHTS.

2. THE MINISTER SAID SOME SEVENTY STUDENTS ARE PRESENTLY AWAITING TRIAL IN CONNECTION WITH THE OCTOBER 6 INCIDENT AT THAMMASART UNIVERSITY, AND THAT THEIR CASES WILL BE HANDLED BY THE COURTS IN THE NORMAL FASHION. THE CHARGE SAID THAT WE WERE PLEASED THAT THESE CASES WOULD RECEIVE DUE PROCESS IN OPEN COURT. HE

ALSO SAID THAT IT WAS IMPRTANT THAT THERE BE A GENERAL PERCEPTION  
THAT THE TRIALS ARE CONDUCTED WITH A CLEAR REGARD TO DUE PROCESS.

3. COMMENT: SAMAK COMMENTS WERE FAIRLY STANDARD FARE FOR HIM;  
HOWEVER, THEY DID AFFORD OPPORTUNITY FOR CHARGE IN LOW KEY TO  
MAKE A FEW USEFUL POINTS WITH REGARD TO OUR HUMAN RIGHTS  
POLICY. SAMAK ACCEPTED COMMENTS AMICABLY AND WITHOUT CONTENTION.  
O'DONOHUE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
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